

The Cincinnati Art Museum Bulletin



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NEW SERIES, VOLUME 1, NUMBER 2, DECEMBER 1950

Cover: "Adoration in Initial 'S,'" from a musical manuscript,
north Italian, late XIVth or early XVth century.
Right: "Ascension in Initial 'O,'" from a choral manuscript originally in the
Cathedral of Pavia. The richly ornamented facade of this great Carolingian monastery
dates from 1491 to 1507, about the period of the manuscript.
Gifts of Dr. and Mrs. J. Louis Kautzsch.



*"Woman, Half Draped,
Bending Over," pastel,
by Suzanne Valadon,
French (1867-1938).
Gift of Dr. and Mrs.
J. Louis Ransohoff.*



SUZANNE VALADON

With the recent gift of a pastel drawing by Suzanne Valadon, three famous women artists are now represented in the Museum's permanent collections. The Valadon pastel, "Woman, Half Draped, Bending Over," was given by Dr. and Mrs. J. Louis Ransohoff of Cincinnati together with two Renaissance manuscript initials and a French enamel. The drawing hangs now in the second floor rotunda with a group of watercolors and pastels. In nearby galleries are paintings by Virgée Le Brun and Mary Cassatt, who complete the trio of women artists.

Suzanne Valadon's identification with recent French art is three-fold: as a famous model, an artist and the mother of Maurice Utrillo, well-known painter of Montmartre street scenes. Montmartre, where tradition says St. Denis, patron of France, was beheaded, was the birthplace of major developments in late 19th and early 20th century art. This picturesque suburb of Paris played an important part in the lives of this mother and son. The

precocious Suzanne went there at the age of fifteen seeking employment and excitement. She had been born Marie-Clémentine Valadon in 1865 in a village near Limoges, had moved to Paris with her mother who found work there as a scrubwoman and seamstress. Before being attracted to Montmartre, Suzanne had been an acrobat in a small circus at the Place Pigalle, but a slight injury soon put an end to this career. A fortunate accident it proved, because her posing for Puvis de Chavannes, Toulouse-Lautrec and Renoir led to the disclosure of her own talent. She had drawn since childhood but it was not until Renoir found her doing a self-portrait that anyone took her artistic abilities seriously.

From then on her development as an artist was steady. Toulouse-Lautrec insisted that she use the name "Suzanne" and sent her to Degas with her work to prove to him that an untaught "natural talent" such as hers could produce a work of merit. Degas, the caustic recluse and woman-hater, was impressed, told her that her work was good.

One of Degas' pastels of ballet dancers hangs across the Museum rotunda from the recently acquired Valadon drawing, testimony that Lautrec was right. But though Suzanne never had a formal lesson she had the constant companionship, encouragement and instruction of her artist friends. The Museum's drawing probably comes from these early years before she was widely recognized. In it her debt to Degas is particularly evident: the heavy contours and delicate touches of color. Like Degas and Lautrec, she penetrated reality, setting down what she selected with strength, clarity and brutal honesty.

Her work manifests a woman of determination and decision, traits of character that lifted her from the poverty of her childhood and youth to the comfort of a chateau near Lyons where she lived toward the end of her life with her sickly son. But years of instability and insecurity were reflected in reckless living and excessive alcoholism, habits that cut down her output, hastened her end and were a constant problem in the life of Utrillo.

Suzanne Valadon died in 1938 at the age of 73. In Paris today she is considered one of the important painters of the Post-Impressionist group. But in this country her work is hardly known and rarely collected. Such, however, cannot be said of her son's work. His haunting, tasteful Montmartre landscapes are avidly collected and widely reproduced.

Valadon's drawing, reproduced with this brief introduction, is a welcome addition to the Museum's growing collections. On the second floor are displayed the two Italian Renaissance initials from manuscripts and the French 16th century enamel that were also given by Dr. and Mrs. Ransohoff. They, too, are reproduced in this issue of the Bulletin.

*"Flight into Egypt,"
enamel, late XVth century,
French, Limoges.
Gift of Dr. and Mrs.
J. Louis Ransohoff.*



E. H.D.





PIETER DE HOOCH

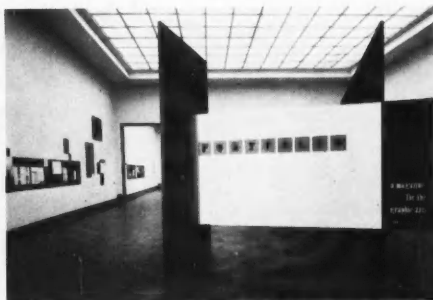
Painted the "Game of Skittles" in Amsterdam about 1665. The stately villa is one of many that lined the placid Vecht from Amsterdam to Utrecht, making it the most aristocratic thoroughfare of XVIIIth century Europe. The garden is of a type soon to be introduced to England, where its pleached alleys and sculptured hedges will be called a "Dutch Garden," though Hollanders of the XVIIIth century will borrow it back and label it an "English Garden." The time is that moment of perfect light which de Hooch and Vermeer alone among painters could catch and hold.

Pieter de Hooch had known Vermeer well from the time of his marriage to the daughter of a Delft potter in 1654 to his removal to Amsterdam in 1662. He was born in 1629, and is thought to have died soon after his last dated canvas of 1684.

There are two other versions of the "Game of Skittles," differing in size and minor details: a signed one in the James A. de Rothschild Collection in England, the other in the City Art Museum of St. Louis. The Museum's new masterpiece measures $29\frac{1}{8}$ by $26\frac{1}{8}$ inches, was known in two English private collections of the XIXth century and has an extensive bibliography. It has been shown in notable exhibitions in Rotterdam and Amsterdam, as well as American cities.

The painting is the gift of Miss Mary Hanna and hangs with the other great paintings from Holland's great century which Miss Hanna has previously given, in the wing that bears her name.





Two views of Portfolio Exhibition.

EVENTS

Lecture by Marvin C. Ross

On Friday evening, December 8, the Museum is privileged to present Mr. Marvin C. Ross, Curator of Mediæval and Subsequent Decorative Arts of the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, in a lecture on "Old Sèvres, the Porcelain of Kings." Designed as a corollary to the Museum's fall showing of 18th century decorative arts rooms, the lecture will introduce a scholar who probably has no equal in the United States in knowledge of the decorative arts.

Mr. Ross studied at Harvard University, in New York and in Berlin, travelled extensively in Europe, and held Carnegie and Guggenheim Fellowships. A captain in the U. S. Marine Corps Reserve, he served during the war on General Eisenhower's administrative staff as well as on SHAEF as Deputy Adviser on Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives.

A distinguished mediævalist, Mr. Ross has also, with Anna W. Rutledge in 1948, compiled a catalog of the work of William Henry Rinehart, 19th century Maryland sculptor, and is at present preparing a monograph on Antoine Louis Barye (1796-1875), French sculptor.

Fifth Annual Exhibition of Local Art

Again this year more than 500 entries were submitted to the Annual Exhibition of Artists of Cincinnati and vicinity. As is the custom, the jury members, with Mr. Philip R. Adams as moderator, discussed problems of the artist at an evening symposium. This year the out-of-town jury consisted of Mr. Francis

Chapin, nationally known painter of Chicago, and Mr. Andrew C. Ritchie, Director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture at the Museum of Modern Art. The exhibition will be held from November 27 through January 9.

Paris Exhibition Posters

Paris Exhibition Posters was organized in Paris for the San Francisco Museum of Art, where it was first shown, and is sponsored as a travelling loan exhibition by the American Federation of Arts. These posters were made in the last few years to advertise art exhibitions in Paris. Some were lithographed by the artists themselves and are originals; others are offset reproductions of their paintings. The importance of this display is that it demonstrates how the same taste and skill employed in the creation of a painting can be applied also to the production of a poster, and that, although each has its own uses, both are art processes.

Towards the end of the 19th century in Paris, the lithographed posters of Chéret, Toulouse-Lautrec, Bonnard and others (whose method was to draw directly on the stones) were eagerly collected. The present exhibition includes excellent posters of various exhibitions by Braque, Matisse, Miro, Lipchitz, Ernst, Villon and Picasso. Perhaps this new painter's use of poster design will again attract the attention of collectors. (Alms Galleries, November 9-26.)

Modern Art Society

During November the Cincinnati Modern Art Society presented the sixth biennial exhibition of acquisitions by its members. The 53 works, filling two Alms Galleries, were testimony of continued interest in collecting modern art. The 18 oil paintings, two pieces of sculpture and 33 prints, drawings and watercolors showed an extremely wide diversity in taste and covered 50 years from Cézanne and Bonnard to recent work by Dali, Braque and Chagall.

Portfolio

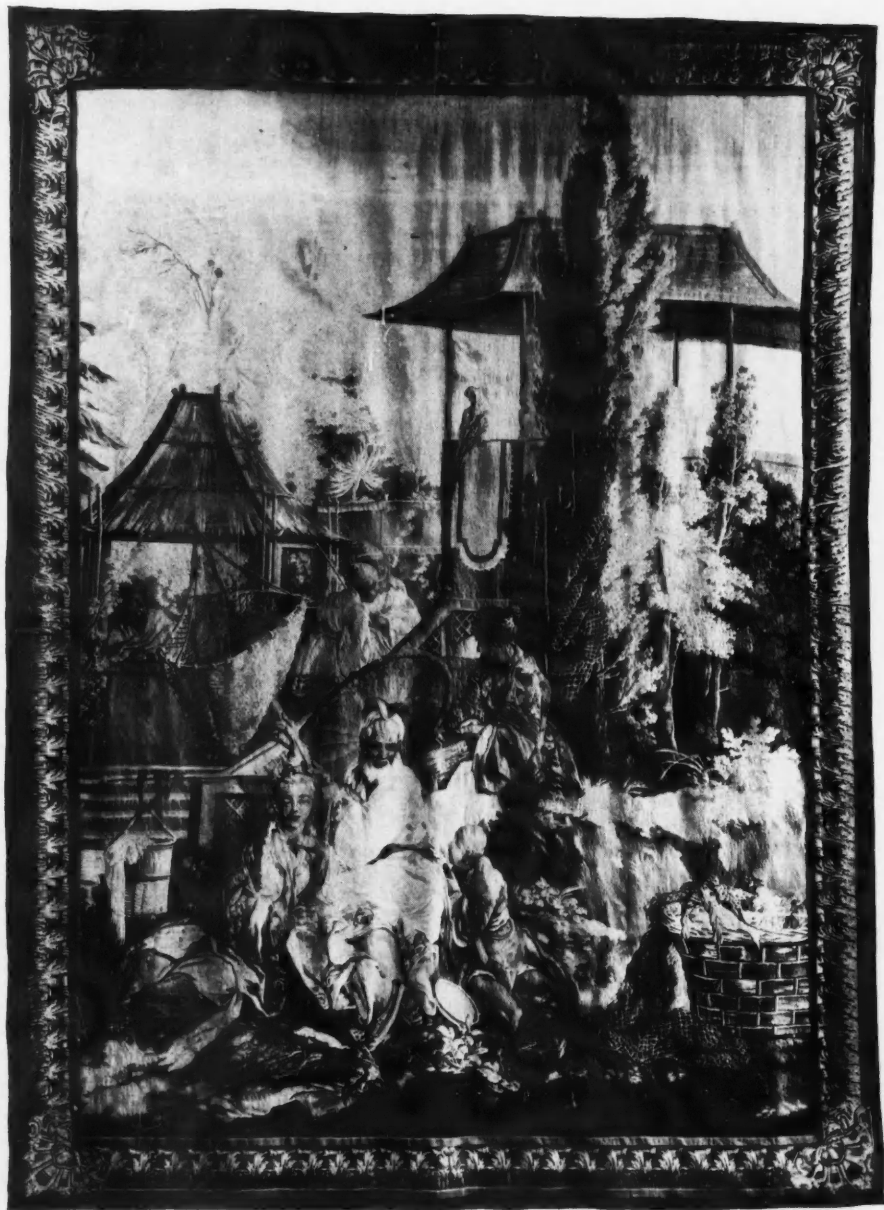
The new graphic arts magazine Portfolio has attracted national attention. For one month ending November 19th the Museum presented material from the first two issues. The exhibition proved of unusual interest because it contained original work, layouts and final printed pages and afforded a behind-the-scene look. Portfolio magazine is printed in Cincinnati, edited by George S. Rosenthal and Frank Zachary, with Alexey Brodovitch as Art Editor. The installation of the exhibition was designed by Noel Martin and Edward Dwight, members of the Museum staff.

*"The Pastry Shop,"
color lithograph,
about 1899,
by Edouard Vuillard,
French (1867-1940).
Gift of the Print
and Drawing Circle.*



*Tapestry with a
Chinese theme,
woven at Beauvais
about 1750
from a drawing by
François Boucher
(1703-1770).*

*Several of
Boucher's sketches
for this series of
eight tapestries
are in the Museum
at Besançon.*



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